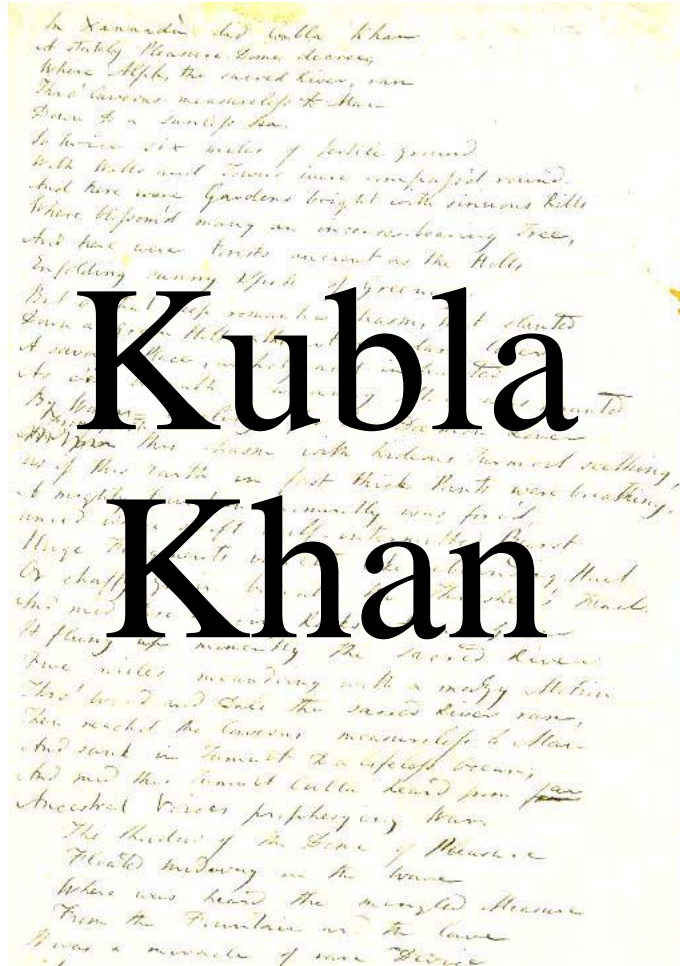


Vocal score



poem by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

music by Philip Legge

Vocal score

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Kubla Khan

Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem *Kubla Khan* is an unsettling glimpse of the poet's unconscious as well as a vivid and evocative set of dreamlike images. The story of how it came to be written is well-known; the visions in a dream inspired by reading a passage of *Purchas's Pilgrimage* relating the construction of the Khan's palace (and possibly influenced by laudanum) might have resulted in a poem of two or three hundred lines had not Coleridge been interrupted by the infamous "man from Porlock". We are left instead with a fleeting spiral of fragmentary images and ideas that never seem to connect. A fragment of Coleridge's Fragment appears on the cover (Add. MS 50847, f. 1v).

The obvious inspiration for the harp accompaniment is the first line of the final stanza, "A damsel with a dulcimer", and the instrumental trio of a harp and two flutes is not completely unknown. The keyboard part here is a transcription of the harp and flute parts suitable for rehearsal with piano. A proper orchestral double harp is preferred for performance, however an electronic keyboard with a full set of octaves and capable of producing a decent harp-like timbre may prove adequate (as well as overcoming the harp's limitations in rapid changes of tuning), especially if the choir is comparatively large.

Programme Notes by the composer:

"The poem '*Kubla Khan*' by Coleridge has been a favourite of mine for many years, but the inspiration to set it to music – originally for female voices with harp accompaniment – came to me on a holiday a couple of years ago, when I scribbled down a fragmentary page or two.

"Coleridge had been in self-imposed retreat at a country farm-house when he wrote the poem, and had been taking opium purportedly as a relief for some illness, so after reading a travel book with an exotic description of Kublai Khan's palace, he had an extremely vivid poetic dream. Unfortunately after he awoke he was interrupted while in the middle of writing it all down, and later on he couldn't remember the poem or the dream; so what little of the poem that remains is very evocative.

"Unlike Coleridge I can't claim to have been inspired by an opium-influenced dream, but most of that musical fragment I wrote has found its way into the current composition in one form or another. The poem – and my music as well – consists of a dreamy and kaleidoscopic series of images and motifs, some of which recur and connect overtly or subliminally. The impetus of a performance led me to expand the work to incorporate two flutes as well as full mixed-voice choir, and a small solo for soprano."

Kubla Khan received its première at the Kaleide Theatre, RMIT University, Melbourne, on June 4 2004.

Flutes: Karl Billeter, Nick Adler

Soprano solo: Sarah Chan

Keyboard (*quasi arpa*): Michael Winikoff

The RMIT Occasional Choral Society (ROCS), conducted by Philip Legge

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Kubla Khan

(Or, a vision in a dream. A fragment)

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves:
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 1798

Kubla Khan

Samuel Taylor Coleridge
(1772–1834)

(2003–4)

Philip Legge
(*1972)

With a slow swing, about ♩. = 54

Soprano solo

Sopranos

Altos

Tenors

Basses

Keyboard (practice only)

With a slow swing, about ♩. = 54

sf *mf* *p*

16 December 2003

5

p

p In Xa - na - du,

In Xa - na - du, in

9

p ① *cresc.*

In Xa - na - du, in *cresc.* Xa - - - na - du did

in Xa - na - du, in *cresc.* Xa - - - na - du did

Xa - na - du, *p* *cresc.* in Xa - - - na - du did

In Xa - na - du, in Xa - - - na - du did

①

13

Ku - bla_ Khan A state - ly plea - sure - dome

Ku - bla Khan A state - ly plea - sure - dome

Ku - bla Khan A state - ly plea - sure - dome

Ku - bla Khan A state - ly plea - sure - dome

13

16

de - - cree: Where Alph, the sa - cred

de - - cree: Where Alph, the sa - cred

de - - cree: Where Alph, the sa - cred

de - - cree: Where Alph, the sa - cred

16

19 2

ri - ver, ran Through ca - verns mea - sure - less to man Down to a sun - less sea.

ri - ver, ran Through ca - verns mea - sure - less to man Down to a sun - less sea.

ri - ver, ran Through ca - verns mea - sure - less to man Down to a sun - less sea.

ri - ver, ran Through ca - verns mea - sure - less to man Down to a sun - less sea.

19 2

24 *mp*

mp So twice five miles of fer - tile ground With walls and tow'rs were

mp So twice five miles of fer - tile ground With walls and tow'rs were

mp So twice five miles of fer - tile ground With walls and tow'rs were

mp So twice five miles of fer - tile ground With walls and tow'rs were

24

28 *p* 3

p gird - dled round: And here were gar - dens bright with sin - uous rills Where blos - somed

gird - dled round: Where blos - somed

gird - dled round: Where blos - somed

gird - dled round: Where blos - somed

gird - dled round: Where blos - somed

28 3

33

ma - ny an in - cense - bear - ing tree;

ma - ny an in - cense - bear - ing tree;

ma - ny an in - cense - bear - ing tree;

And here were fo - rests an - cient as the

And here were fo - rests an - cient as the

33

38

mp En - fol - ding sun - ny spots_ of green - e - ry.

mp En - fol - ding sun - ny spots of green - e - ry.

mp hills, En - fol - ding sun - ny spots_ of green - e - ry.

mp hills, En - fol - ding sun - ny spots of green - e - ry.

Allegro, broad in feeling, about $\text{♩} = 108$

Allegro, broad in feeling, about $\text{♩} = 108$

f

38

④

43

ac - - - cel - - - e - - - ran - - -

poco a poco cresc.

43

47 do ... al ... Vivace, about $\text{♩} = 132$ **5**

But o! that

do ... al ... Vivace, about $\text{♩} = 132$ But o! that

quasi-glissando *mp* **5**

51 deep ro - man - tic cha - sm which slant - ed Down the green hill a-thwart a

deep ro - man - tic cha - sm which slan - ted Down the green hill a-thwart a

deep ro - man - tic cha - sm which slan - ted Down the green hill a-thwart a

deep ro - man - tic cha - sm which slan - ted Down the green hill a - thwart a

mp **51** *f*

55 ce - darn_ co - ver! A sa - - vage place! as *mp*

ce - darn_ co - ver! A sa - - vage place! as *mp*

ce - darn co - ver! A sa - - vage place! as

ce - darn_ co - ver! A sa - - vage place!

mp **55** *f*

59 6

ho - ly and en - chant - ed As e'er be - neath a

ho - ly and en - chant - ed As e'er be - neath a

ho - ly and en - chant - ed As e'er be - neath a

59 6

62

wa - ning moon was haunt - ed By wo - man wail - ing, for her

wa - ning moon was haunt - ed By wo - man wail - ing, for her

wa - ning moon was haunt - ed By wo - man wail - ing, for her

62

66 7

de - mon lo - ver! And from this chasm, with cease - less tur - moil

de - mon lo - ver! And from this chasm, with cease - less tur - moil

de - mon lo - ver! And from this chasm, with cease - less tur - moil

de - mon lo - ver! And from this chasm, with cease - less tur - moil

66 7

71

seeth - ing, As if this earth in fast thick pants were breath - ing, *mf* A migh - ty foun - tain *p subito* mo - ment -

seeth - ing, As if this earth in fast thick pants were breath - ing, *mf* A migh - ty foun - tain *p subito* mo - ment -

seeth - ing, As if this earth in fast thick pants were breath - ing, *mf* A migh - ty foun - tain *p subito* mo - ment -

seeth - ing, As if this earth in fast thick pants were breath - ing, *mf* A migh - ty foun - tain *p subito* mo - ment -

71

76

ly was forced; *mf* A - mid whose swift half - in - ter - mit - ted burst Huge frag - ments

ly was forced;

ly was forced;

ly was forced;

76

8

81

vault - ed like re - bound - ing hail, *mf* And 'mid these danc - ing

And 'mid these danc - ing

Or chaff - y grain be - neath the thresh - er's flail: *mf*

Or chaff - y grain be - neath the thresh - er's flail:

81

10
86

cresc. **poco rit.** **Meno allegro, about $\text{♩} = 120$**

f

rocks at once and e-ver It flung up mo - ment - ly the sa - cred ri - ver...

cresc. *f*

rocks at once and e-ver It flung up mo - ment - ly the sa - cred ri - ver...

cresc. *f*

It flung up mo - ment - ly the sa - cred ri - ver...

cresc. *f*

It flung up mo - ment - ly the sa - cred ri - ver...

poco rit. **Meno allegro, about $\text{♩} = 120$**

cresc. *f*

86

90 ⑨

p

Five miles me - an - der-ing with a ma - zy mo-tion Through

p

Through

p

Through

p

Through

90 ⑨

95

wood and dale the sa - cred ri - ver ran, Then

wood and dale the sa - cred ri - ver ran, Then

wood and dale the sa - cred ri - ver ran, Then

wood and dale the sa - cred ri - ver ran,

95

10

100

reached the ca - - verns mea - sure less to man,

reached the ca - - verns mea - sure less to man,

8 reached the ca - - verns mea - sure less to man, And sank in

T. II *mf*

B. II *mf*

And sank in

mf

100

10

106

pp 11 *cresc.*

And 'mid this tu - mult Ku - bla

pp *cresc.*

And 'mid this tu - mult Ku - bla

p, *pp* T.I: And 'mid this *cresc.*

tu - mult to a life - less o - cean: And 'mid this tu - mult Ku - bla

p, *pp* B.I: And 'mid this *cresc.*

tu - mult to a life - less o - cean: And 'mid this tu - mult Ku - bla

p

pp tremelo rap. *cresc.*

106

11

112 *f* heard from far An - cest - ral voi - ces pro - phe-sy - ing war!

heard from far An - cest - ral voi - ces pro - phe-sy - ing war!

8 *f* *unis.* heard from far An - cest - ral voi - ces pro - phe-sy - ing war!

heard from far An - cest - ral voi - ces pro - phe-sy - ing war!

112 *f* *cresc.* *ff* 8va

Wild,

then... *Alla marcia* (metronomic and slower)

12

117 *ff*

ff

ff

ff

Wild,

then... *Alla marcia* (metronomic and slower)

12

(8) *f*

117

Losing momentum

121 *dim.*

121

125 **Slower, languid, about $\text{♩} = 80$**
SOPRANOS

p

The sha - - dow of the

125

129 **13**

dome of plea - sure Float - - ed mid - way on the

129

13

133

waves: ALTOS

Where was heard the ming - led mea - sure From the

133

137 **14**

It was a mi-ra-cle of

foun - tain and the caves.

137

14

141

rare de - vice, A sun-ny plea-sure dome with caves of

141

145

ice!

p

145

Moderate, about $\text{♩} = 120$

149 SOPRANO SOLO (15)

Moderate, about $\text{♩} = 120$

A dam-sel with a dul-ci-mer In a vi-sion once I saw: It was an

149

(15)

157 hemiola: $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

poco rit. (16)

Tempo

A - bys-si - ni-an maid, And on her dul-ci-mer she played, Sing - ing of Mount A - bo - ra.

hemiola: $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

poco rit.

Tempo

157

164

164

(17)

170 A little slower, $\text{♩} = 100$

Slower again, $\text{♩} = 80$

Could I re - vive with - in me Her sym - pho - ny and song, To such a deep de - light 'twould

T. TUTTI *p*

B. TUTTI *p*

A little slower, $\text{♩} = 100$

Slower again, $\text{♩} = 80$ Could I re - vive

170

* Abora: the composer suggests the first syllable is sung with a long "A", as in "arbor" (but with as little or no hint of an "r" before the next syllable).

18

176

win_____ me

p Could I re - vive with-in me

p Could I re - vive with-in me Her sym - pho-ny and song,

- pho-ny and song, To such a deep de - light_____ 'twould win_____ me, Could I re -

with-in me Her sym - pho-ny and song, To such a deep de - light_____ 'twould win_____ me,

176

18

181

Slightly faster, about $\text{♩} = 88$

Her sym - pho-ny and song, To such a deep de-light,_____ 'twould win_____ me, to such a deep de-

To such a deep de - light_____ 'twould win_____ me, To such a deep de - light_____ to

vive with-in me Her sym - pho-ny and song, To such a deep de - light,_____ to such de - light,_____ to

Could I re - vive with-in me Her sym - pho-ny and song, to such a deep de-

Slightly faster, about $\text{♩} = 88$

mf

181

accelerando**Allegro**, about $\text{♩} = 108$

light, to such a deep de - light, to such a deep de - light 'twould win

such a deep de - light, to such a deep de - light, to such a deep de - light 'twould win

such a deep de - light, to such a deep de - light, to such a deep de - light 'twould win

light, to such a deep de - light, to such a deep de - light 'twould win

accelerando **Allegro**, about $\text{♩} = 108$

cresc. *f*

186

19

me That with mus - ic loud and long,

me That with mus - ic loud and long,

me That with mus - ic loud and long,

me That with mus - ic loud and long,

f *f* *f* *f*

8^{va}

190

19

193 ac - - - - cel - - - - e - - - - 17

I would build that dome in air, That sun-ny dome! those

I would build that dome in air, That sun-ny dome! those

I would build that dome in air, That sun-ny dome! those

I would build that dome in air, That sun-ny dome! those

8va

193

197 ran - - - - do ... al ... Vivace, about $\text{♩} = 132^*$ 20

caves of ice! And all who heard should see them there, And

caves of ice! And all who heard should see them there, And

caves of ice! And all who heard should see them there, And

caves of ice! And all who heard should see them there, And

quasi glissando mp

197 20

* Do not give in to the illusory appearance of the choir singing in $\frac{6}{4}$

201

f

all should cry, Be - ware! Be-ware! His flash - - - ing

f

all should cry, Be - ware! Be-ware! His flash - - - ing

f

all should cry, Be - ware! Be-ware! His flash - - - ing

f

all should cry, Be - ware! Be-ware! His flash - - - ing

201

204

eyes, his float - - - ing hair!

eyes, his float - - - ing hair!

eyes, his float - - - ing hair!

eyes, his float - - - ing hair!

204

207

p

Weave a cir - cle round him thrice, And close your eyes with ho - ly dread, For he on

p

Weave a cir - cle round him thrice, And close your eyes with ho - ly dread, For he on

p

Weave a cir - cle round him thrice...with ho - ly dread, For he on

p

Weave a cir - cle round... with dread, For he on

207

(21)

(21)

212 *mf*

ho - - ney - dew hath fed, and drunk the milk of Pa - ra - dise.

mf

ho - - ney - dew hath fed, and drunk the milk of Pa - ra - dise.

mf

ho - - ney - dew hath fed, and drunk the milk of Pa - ra - dise.

mf

ho - - ney - dew hath fed, and drunk the milk of Pa - ra - dise.

212

217 niente

niente

niente

niente

22

dim.

p

pp

217

22

222 poco rit.

222

